

Ohio's Pandemic EBT Program

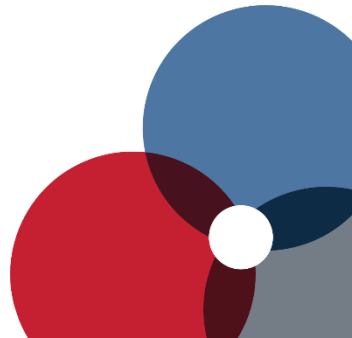
Food Funds for Children Missing School Meals

Webinar for Social Service Agencies, Educators, and Outreach Partners

Friday, May 29, 2020 at 11:00am

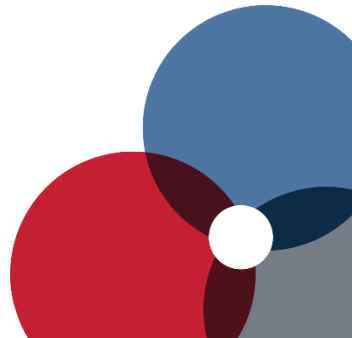
Agenda

1. Overview of Pandemic EBT Program – [Mindy Kowalski, Ohio Dept. of Job and Family Services](#)
 - Frequently Asked Questions – [Rachel Cahill, Center for Community Solutions](#)
2. Outreach to Families from Schools + Reaching Homeless and Transient Students
 - [Brigette Hires, Ohio Dept. of Education](#)
 - [Jessica Shelly and Frances Russ, Cincinnati Public Schools](#)
3. Reaching immigrant families and those with limited English proficiency
 - Public charge - [Lisa Splawinski, Legal Aid Society of Cleveland](#)
 - Reaching the Latino community - [Veronica Dahlberg, HOLA Ohio](#)
 - Helpful platforms and messaging - [Amanuel Merdassa, Ethiopian Tewahedo Social Services](#)
4. Outreach materials – [Joree Novotny, Ohio Association of Food Banks](#)
5. Question & Answers



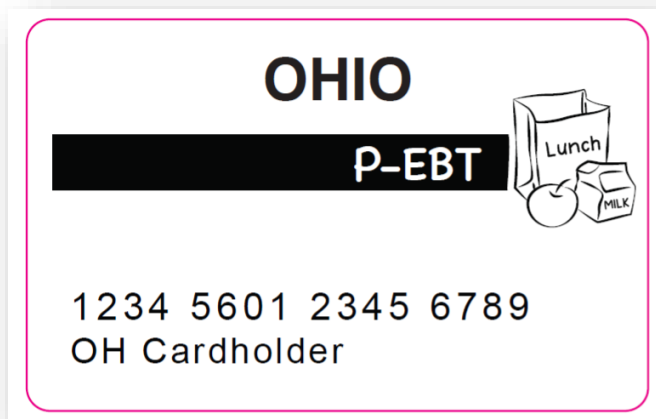
Pandemic EBT Overview

- The Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) Program was authorized by Congress on March 18, 2020. Ohio's P-EBT Plan received federal approval on May 12.
- The P-EBT Program provides grocery money to families whose children were receiving free/reduced-price meals at school. **In Ohio, no application is required for P-EBT.**
- The Ohio Dept. of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) and Ohio Department of Education (ODE) identified 850,000 eligible children for a total of \$254.5 million in federal nutrition aid.
 - 60% of these children currently receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
 - 40% of eligible children live in “non-SNAP” households and will receive a P-EBT card in the mail



Pandemic EBT Overview

- All children eligible for free/reduced-price meals are eligible for P-EBT. This includes children who attend “community eligibility” schools, where meals are provided to all students for free.
- Children eligible for free/reduced-price meals as of March will receive a one-time issuance of \$302.10. Children who became eligible in April will receive \$239.40.



- Children in SNAP households (if match succeeded) - P-EBT funds will go on their existing Ohio Direction Card.
- Children in Non-SNAP households – New P-EBT cards will be mailed to the address provided by the child’s school district (as of 4/29/2020).
- P-EBT funds will be issued by the end of May. P-EBT cards should arrive in the mail by mid-June.

Pandemic EBT Overview

- For Non-SNAP recipients and those who could not be matched to an existing case through data, **P-EBT cards will be issued in the child's name**. Any household member can use the card to purchase groceries. The named child does not need to be present.
- P-EBT cards will be mailed with instructions (below) for setting a unique PIN number.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PINNING AND USE OF YOUR P-EBT CARD

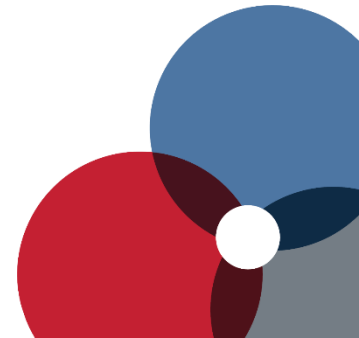
If you have any questions regarding your participation in this program, please contact
Ohio EBT Customer Service at 1-866-386-3071

How do I activate the card?

Call the phone number on the back of the card. You will need the EBT card number on the front of the card, your zip code, and the date of birth of the child named on the card. You will **also** need to enter **the four digits of the year of the child's birth** (e.g. 1980) **for** the last 4 digits of the child's Social Security Number, when prompted. You will need to set a new four-digit **PIN** number to use the card.

How do I use the card?

Once activated, the card can be used to purchase eligible food items anywhere SNAP/EBT cards are accepted. While the card is in the name of the child, the child does not need to be present when using the card. You will need to use the PIN number you created when activating the card **and for each SNAP EBT transaction**. The card can be used in the point of sale device, just like a debit card or can be handed to the cashier.



Pandemic EBT Overview



Ohio | Department of Education
Department of Job and Family Services

Important Information about Your Child's School Meals

If you have a child in kindergarten through twelfth grade in your household who was receiving free or reduced-price meals while in school, your child is eligible for the Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) program to receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits as a result of the school closure.

What are the benefits the child will receive?

The amount of benefits is \$5.70 per child for each school day the child was eligible for free or reduced-price meals between March 17, 2020 through May 29, 2020.

Do I have to accept the card and use it?

- » No, your participation in the program is voluntary.
- » If you choose not to participate, please dispose of your card by cutting through the magnetic stripe on the card and discard the card in a secure manner.
- » If you do not want the card, you will not be able to redeem the food benefits, nor can you transfer the card to someone else.

How can I use these benefits?

These benefits can be used to buy food items at grocery stores/retailers that accept the Ohio Direction Card (also referred to as an EBT card).

If the child is a current SNAP recipient:

- » By the end of May, the P-EBT benefits may be added to the account on which the child is active.
- » If the child was unable to be matched to his or her active SNAP account, you will be sent a P-EBT card in the child's name.

If the child is not a current SNAP recipient:

- » By the end of May, a preloaded P-EBT card will be mailed. The card will be in the child's name, not the parent or guardian's name. Instructions on how to activate the card will be included.

If you have any questions, please contact 1-866-244-0071.

- Families with eligible children will receive a flyer from the child's school via email. The official P-EBT flyer (left) is also available in Spanish and Somali.
- P-EBT funds will remain available for 12 months. Funds do not need to be spent in a single transaction.
- P-EBT cards can be used anywhere EBT/SNAP is accepted. Like SNAP, P-EBT cards cannot be used to purchase hot prepared foods, alcohol, toiletries, or other non-food items.
- Families with questions about P-EBT can contact ODJFS Customer Service at **1-866-244-0071** or **Family_Assistance_Inquiries@jfs.ohio.gov**.



Frequently Asked Questions

Q1: Is Pandemic EBT a replacement for “grab-and-go” and/or summer meals offered by schools?

A1: No, schools can continue operating these programs and children may participate in both.

Q2: Are children who enrolled in SNAP after 4/29 eligible for P-EBT?

A2: No, only children enrolled in SNAP or free/reduced-price meals as of 4/29 will get P-EBT.

Q3: If the school had outdated address information and/or the child no longer lives at that address, who should the family contact?

A3: Contact ODJFS Customer Service at **1-866-244-0071** or [Family Assistance Inquiries@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:Family_Assistance_Inquiries@jfs.ohio.gov) if P-EBT funds or a P-EBT card have not been received by mid-June. ODJFS can tell you where the P-EBT card was mailed and how to request a replacement.

Q4: Are children who are home-schooled or attend a school that does not participate in the National School Lunch Program eligible for P-EBT?

A4: No, only children who would be receiving free/reduced-price meals if schools were open are eligible.



Frequently Asked Questions

Q5: Is P-EBT available to kindergarten through 12th grade students, regardless of their age?

A5: P-EBT is available to eligible students in K-12th grade who are age 5-20. Children younger than age 5 are not eligible, even if they attend a pre-kindergarten or preschool program at a participating school.

Q6: If a family has multiple children eligible for P-EBT and do not participate in SNAP, will they get multiple cards?

A6: Yes, for Non-SNAP households, families will receive a separate card for each eligible child.

Q7: Is P-EBT available to immigrant children?

A7: Yes. Like the National School Lunch Program, P-EBT is available to all school children regardless of immigration status. P-EBT is a replacement for free/reduced-price school meals which is not considered in a “public charge” determination.



P-EBT AND PUBLIC CHARGE CONCERNS

Lisa Splawinski

Attorney with the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland

WHAT IS PUBLIC CHARGE?

- A **ground of inadmissibility** that could prevent someone from getting a visa or getting a green card (becoming a lawful permanent resident)
 - Only ONE ground of inadmissibility out of a long list
 - Entire list is found at INA § 212(a)
- Applies to **some** people who are applying for legal permission to live in the U.S. as permanent residents
 - Consular processing at a U.S. embassy/consulate outside of the U.S.
 - Filing I-485 application while already in the U.S.
- Concept of public charge has been a part of U.S. immigration law since 1882
 - BUT what has recently changed is HOW the U.S. government makes a decision about whether someone is “likely to become a public charge”
 - It has become much more **difficult** to prove that a person will not become a “public charge”
- Idea is that the U.S. government does not want to let people live in the U.S. for a long time that the government would have to support (economically and/or through health care system)

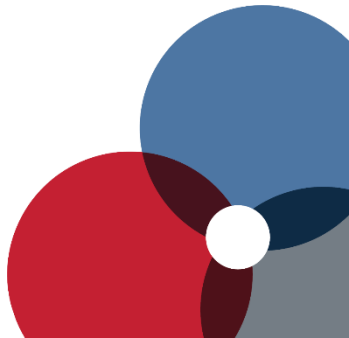
WILL A CHILD'S USE OF P-EBT AUTOMATICALLY MAKE SOMEONE A PUBLIC CHARGE?

- Short answer: NO
 - Public charge ground of inadmissibility **does not apply to everyone**
 - Public charge test considers the “totality of circumstances” – age, health, family status, education/skills, English proficiency, financial status, affidavit of support, others – in determining whether a person is likely to use certain benefits in the future
 - Benefits that immigration officials currently consider in public charge determination: TANF, SSI, state-sponsored cash assistance for income maintenance, SNAP, Medicaid (with some exceptions), Section 8, Public housing
 - **Child nutrition programs (school lunch/breakfast, food banks, P-EBT) are available regardless of status and not a factor considered in public charge test**
 - Other examples of benefits **not considered: benefits received by family members**, disaster relief, emergency Medicaid, WIC, student loans, earned income tax credit and child tax credit, any other benefits not listed in 8 CFR § 212.21(b)
- **BUT SHOULD ALWAYS CONSULT WITH AN IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY TO HAVE AN INDIVIDUALIZED AND MORE DEFINITE ANSWER**
- Other resources: Protecting Immigrant Families; National Immigration Law Center

HOW TO CONTACT LEGAL AID OF CLEVELAND

- My email address: Lisa.Splawinski@lasclev.org
- Website: www.lasclev.org
- Online intake: <https://lasclev.org/contact/>
- Phone intake:
 - English: 216-687-1900 or 888-817-3777 (toll free)
 - Spanish: 216-586-3190
 - Phone numbers for various other languages: <https://lasclev.org/contact/>

For outreach materials, translated flyers, FAQs, and more, please visit OhioPEBT.org



P-EBT Contact Information

To join community-based education and outreach efforts, contact –

- Rachel Cahill, Consultant, Center for Community Solutions,
rachel@rcahillconsulting.com
- Joree Novotny, Communications Director, Ohio Association of Food Banks,
jnovotny@ohiofoodbanks.org

For individual questions about P-EBT eligibility, contact –

- ODJFS Customer Service at 1-866-244-0071 or
[Family Assistance Inquiries@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:Family_Assistance_Inquiries@jfs.ohio.gov)

